

The Listening Subject of Japanese Modernity and His Auditory Double: Citing, Sighting, and Siting the Modern Japanese Woman

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From approximately 1887 through World War I, a surge of commentaries were written and circulated in the Japanese print media about the “strange” and “unpleasant” (*mimizawarina*) sounds issuing from the mouths of schoolgirls. Male intellectuals of various affiliations located the source of their dismay in verb-ending forms such as *teyo*, *noyo*, *dawa* that occurred at the end of schoolgirl utterances.¹ They called such speech forms “schoolgirl speech” (*jogakusei-kotoba*). It was jarring to their ears; it sounded vulgar and low class; its prosodic features were described as “fast,” “contracting,” and “bouncing with a rising intonation”; and it was condemned as “sugary and shallow.” Using the newly available modern textual space of “reported speech” (Voloshinov 1973), male intellectuals cited what they scornfully referred to as “teyo-dawa speech” (*teyo-dawa kotoba*) in an effort to convince parents and educators to discourage it as a corrupt form of speaking. The irony here is that many of the speech forms then identified as schoolgirl speech are today associated with “women’s language,” or the “feminine” speech style, indexing the figure of the generic urban middle-class woman.² The contemporary discourse of Japanese women’s language erases this historical emergence from social memory to construct women’s language as an essential and timeless part of culture and tradition. Public opinion, responding to a perceived social change toward gender equity, recurrently deplores what once again is described as linguistic corruption and the cultural loss of an authentic women’s language.

As a demographic category,³ the term *schoolgirl* referred to girls and young women of the elite classes who attended the women’s secondary schools that had been instituted as part of the early Meiji modernization project inspired by Western liberal Enlightenment thought. By the late 19th century, women’s secondary education had been incorporated into the state’s mandatory education system, and schoolgirls became the immediate and direct target of the state’s constitution of the (gendered) national subject by educating them

into “good wives and wise mothers” for modernizing Japan and, thereby, transforming them into “modern Japanese women.” Although they constituted less than 0.1 percent of the female school-age population in the middle Meiji, schoolgirls and their (apparently cacophonous) voices were incessantly *cited*, just as their (apparently ubiquitous) presence was continuously *sighted* as an ambivalent icon of modernizing Japan.⁴

What is significant is that male intellectuals were not just distracted by schoolgirl speech but that they positioned themselves in the act of overhearing. Consider the scene of a modern Japanese male intellectual *flâneur* walking on the increasingly urban streets of Tokyo, pausing to eavesdrop on the conversation of schoolgirls. What possesses him as an urban ethnographer/observer to stop and listen to their unspeakably “strange” voice, which he identifies, not as inarticulate noise, undifferentiated from other elements of the sonic landscape of the modernizing city, but as a speech form that signifies in the order of social things? What were the historical conditions of possibility that predisposed intellectuals to hear this schoolgirl voice as “language?” Although hearing someone’s voice on the street might seem natural and obvious, perception (whether auditory or visual) is never a natural or unmediated phenomenon but is always already a social practice. The practice of hearing and seeing, and the subject positions of listener and observer, is as socially constructed and historically emergent as are other corporeal sites and practices of subject formation, such as the body, sex and gender, and race and nationality. A particular mode of hearing and seeing is, then, an effect of a regime of social power, occurring at a particular historical conjuncture, that enables, regulates, and proliferates sensory as well as other domains of experience. The moment of hearing schoolgirl speech not as noise but as a signifier—as *meaning* something to the hearer—is a critical sociohistorical horizon in Japanese modernity.

These auditory practices are embedded in a “language ideology,” or a linguistic regime of the social, that underlies and produces social knowledge of the “structure” of language, retroactively regiments it, and delimits certain (pragmatic) effects of its use (Silverstein 1979).⁵ This metapragmatic awareness, which is, in this case, the recognition of certain linear sequences of sounds as segmentable and as socially meaningful, is historically specific and contingent on a determinate language ideology that it, in turn, informs. Language ideology sets the boundary for what counts as language and what does not and the terms, techniques, and modalities of hearing and citing.

This article thus concerns the liminal or interstitial space where noise and language are neither naturally pre-given nor phenomenologically immanent. It explores the conditions of possibility for the schoolgirl to be heard and cited and thus to be acoustically recognized as a cultural being by Meiji intellectuals as listening subjects. I argue that the modern Japanese woman came into being as a culturally meaningful category in and through her imputed acoustic presence. Citational practices amounted ultimately to consolidating the metapragmatic category of schoolgirl speech and thereby belong to a discursive space where male intellectuals produced and contained the knowledge of the schoolgirl and

her “voice” in a way that “she,” as an acoustic substance, became knowable only as an (assimilated) other. Undoing and denaturalizing this liminal space will render visible (and audible) the discursive and ideological work in the auditory construction of her as the other of the modern Japanese (male) subject.

This article therefore links the auditory emergence of the schoolgirl with various social forces and projects of Japanese modernity at the turn of the 20th century. These include a cluster of language-modernization movements (*gem-bun'itchi*), the state's containment of “Japanese” womanhood, and the consolidation of a new temporality that underwrote the very concept of modernity itself—a sense of drastic social and cultural change, displacement, and progress, as well as a perceived temporal “lag” in comparison to the West. The article then examines metapragmatic commentaries by intellectuals on schoolgirl speech published and circulated in the print media at the turn of the century and shows the semiotic process by which they converted schoolgirl speech from mere sound or noise into a sign, constructing the schoolgirl as the other by containing her voice metapragmatically.

However, the citational practices that produced schoolgirl speech as an index of vulgarity and commonness also, in turn, constituted the male intellectual as a particular historical subject. This article therefore examines the formation of a listening subject beyond the level of the merely pragmatic (the sociolinguistic value of schoolgirl speech) to ask how the speech of schoolgirls became “the object voice” (Dolar 1996), a psychic object, through which the male intellectual was constituted as a listening subject uniquely situated in the context of late 19th- and early-20th-century modernizing Japan. Despite the apparent stability of male subjectivity and its power to effect the auditory containment of the schoolgirl, male intellectuals were in turn interpellated by what schoolgirl speech psychically presented to them.⁶ I argue that schoolgirl speech was “unpleasant to the ears” because it exposed the shakiness of Japan's modernity and the extent to which the Japanese (male) modern self as the subject of Japan's modernity was (and is) inherently fractured with internal contradiction and ambivalence. In the broader sense of Freud's term, schoolgirl speech was “uncanny” because it revealed “something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light” (1990:364).

Through the examination of the auditory construction of the modern Japanese woman, this article engages the enterprise of comparative modernities by showing the primacy of sound as a locus of the experience and knowledge production of the modern. The connection between vision and modernity has been explored in work influenced by Walter Benjamin (1968) that points to the productivity, autonomy, and historicity of vision (Crary 1990; see also Fujitani 1996). Auditory experience (i.e., sound, the act of listening and relaying into the system of indexicality) has, however, been given relatively sparse attention in terms of its historical connection to modernity. This article aims to complicate the hegemony of *vision* as well as the centrality of the Western sensory experience of the modern. The schoolgirl's voice was heard in Japan as an echo

of an “other” modernity, coming from the margin, and was, thus, heard as threatening to Japan’s (male) modernity.

***Jogakusei* (Schoolgirls): Neither Producers nor Reproducers**

The schoolgirl constituted an unprecedented category of Japanese women. Although the majority of young women were producers (workers) who eventually married to become reproducers (wives and mothers), schoolgirls occupied a newly defined interstitial space for the duration of their schooling, being neither producers nor reproducers.⁷ However, outside the direct control of their fathers and families, schoolgirls were nonetheless subjected to the modernizing projects of the state, the market, and civil society by their interpellation within the (ideal) gendered subject position designated by Japan’s industrial capitalism as an urban, middle-class, consumer-housewife.

The idea of “educating women” was nothing new.⁸ What was new in the Meiji period was that women’s education came to be a target of the newly centralized state and thus a project that was both *national* and *modern*. To put it differently, educating women came to be equated with “nationalizing” women (Ueno 1998). In the 1870s and early 1880s, a series of Western books on democratic rights and the Enlightenment by authors such as Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Alexis de Tocqueville were translated and introduced to Japanese intellectuals. This body of Western liberal political philosophy not only became the philosophical foundation for “the people’s rights movement” (*jiyûminkenundô*) but also informed the progressive intellectuals on the modern (and Western) ideal of womanhood and “sex equity.”⁹ Such texts were the foundation for advocating women’s status as citizens of the modern nation-state and, therefore, the importance of educating them. Nonetheless, the idea of citizenship under Japan’s enlightenment project was essentially and inescapably gendered. For women, citizenship was ultimately to be achieved through motherhood. As Koyama (1991) and other historians have pointed out, the emphasis on motherhood was relatively absent in pre-Meiji primers. Motherhood became a discursive apparatus that defined the modern discipline of citizenship for women. The worth of women would be to raise the imperial and national subjects of the next generation, who would contribute to building modern Japan. The Education Order of 1872 stipulated mandatory primary education for both genders (with school curricula, of course, being far from gender neutral) and supported the first normal school for women, founded in 1874.¹⁰

Beyond the fact that schoolgirls were the daughters of the elite, who had access to the kind of education envisioned by the agents of modernization (including state officials, intellectuals, and Christian missionaries), their cultural significance lay in their intrinsic *modern publicness*. From the beginning, schoolgirls were public beings, objects of visual consumption who were subject to the distanced and objective male-national gaze. They were to be sighted in public space, particularly in *modern* space, as iconic figures essential to the new urban landscape, including parks, department stores, museums, zoos, train

stations, and downtown streets. Whatever the social realities and actual experiences of the young women identifying themselves as *jogakusei* might have been, they were mediated beings, represented in various modern representational genres both visually and textually. They were, for example, aesthetic objects of “modern Japanese painting” (*nihonga*) (Inoue 1996), postcards,¹¹ and photographs, as well as characters in novels and as images in print advertising. *Jogakusei* in this sense were both the first subject and first object of the modern Japanese woman whose experiential realities were interchangeable with a “reality” that was accessible in mediated, imagined, and consumable forms. It was the *copies* of the schoolgirl that became “the original”¹² in the process of citational accumulation, and these copies became complexly inscribed on the bodies of living young women.

Guy Debord (1977) calls such a mode of representation “spectacle,” a commodified form of display and sight under capitalist circulation and exchange.¹³ Stripped of the historical and material trace of having been manufactured, spectacle is a sheer surface and appearance that conceals the exploitation, struggle, and antagonism that capitalist social relations inevitably entail. Analogous to what Marx said of wage workers and the commodities they produce, spectacle constitutes “a social relation among people, mediated by images” (Debord 1977: para. 4), where the relationship between the original and its image is inverted.¹⁴ The schoolgirl was, in Marx’s sense, fetishized.¹⁵

Because of her spectacular publicness, possessing neither history nor material social relations, the schoolgirl worked as an empty signifier masking the social and historical condition that made her cultural existence possible. The schoolgirl functioned as a sign to the extent that she represented something *other than herself*. As Elizabeth Cowie observes, “The form of the sign—in linguistic terms the signifier—may empirically be woman, but the signified (i.e., the meaning) is not woman” (Cowie 1978:60). Furthermore, the schoolgirl is a sign of menace and transgression needing to be tamed because her publicness potentially blurs the boundary that distinguishes “modern women” from prostitutes or women in the pleasure quarters, another category of “public” (and “working”) women.¹⁶ Policing women’s sexuality is all about policing class and other social boundaries. As feminist art historian Griselda Pollock notes, “Woman as a sign signifies social order; if the sign is misused it can threaten disorder. The category woman is of profound importance to the order of a society” (Pollock 1988:32). Modern social order in crisis is the male subject in crisis. In the context of the development of modern cities in 18th- and 19th-century Europe, male anxiety was projected onto transgressive female figures such as prostitutes, kleptomaniacs, and women who were seen as hysterical or mad.

It is not mere coincidence, therefore, that essays and commentaries on schoolgirl speech started to appear in the print media in the mid to late 1880s, precisely when the political climate took a reactionary turn against what was perceived to be a too rapid Westernization and modernization. By the middle of the Meiji period, the major institutional infrastructure for the centralized

government had come to include the Meiji Constitution (promulgated in 1889), the opening of the national legislature (the Diet) in 1890, and other nationalizing channels that facilitated communication between the center and the regional peripheries. But these changes characterized as Westernization did not go unchallenged, and reaction in some quarters, combined with the rise of nationalism associated with the Sino-Japanese War (1894–95), occasioned an increasingly nativist political impulse advocating a “return” to “Japanese tradition,” including the emperor and Confucianism. This reactionary movement was reflected in the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890 that emphasized the Confucian moral virtue of loyal subjects as the foundation of the national polity (*kokutai*). The Imperial Rescript was memorized and recited in schools. In this political climate, the supposedly Western liberal ideal of women’s education met with severe criticism that resulted in the decline of the missionary-run women’s schools, the elimination of English and Chinese classics as a subject in many women’s schools, and a proposal to abolish women’s education entirely. Schoolgirl speech emerged as a “problem” precisely at the time when state officials and intellectuals attempted to reinvent “modern” Japan as autonomous from, uncontaminated by, and mutually exclusive to, the West.

A turn-of-the-century dispute over trade illustrates how social crisis was displaced by, and projected onto, a gendered moral crisis. The Ansei Commercial Treaties of 1858, which permitted commercial transactions by “non-Japanese” only within specific jurisdictions, were ratified in 1899. These agreements allowed for free commercial activity, including capital investment, by non-Japanese. Not surprisingly, public commentaries articulated fears about what would happen as a result of these treaties. Referring to the post-1899 situation as *naichi zakkyo* (*naichi* meaning “domestic,” or, in this case, Japan, and *zakkyo* meaning “living together”), the public debate anticipated a “culture war,” an attack by Western civilization on Japanese indigenous culture: Japan would be put in moral and cultural chaos through open and direct competition with “foreigners” (i.e., Westerners) in all areas of society, from commerce to morality. More precisely, however, the concern was that Japan would be held up to Western standards of modernity and would be found wanting. Would Japanese civilization and moral standards be strong enough to withstand Western influence and judgment on an everyday basis? This question focused attention on the need for the improvement of women’s education. As Katayama Seiichi (1984:91–94) and Fukaya Masashi (1981:160–162) rightly point out, it was the increasingly heated debate over *naichi zakkyo* that triggered the state’s interest in establishing regulations on women’s higher education. The purity and stability of national (and racial) identity was, thus, both marked and measured by the disciplining of women’s sexuality and morality.¹⁷

The Directive on Girl’s High Schools (Kotôtôjogakkôrei) was issued in 1899 and signaled the state’s official incorporation of the principle of “good wife and wise mother” into its policy for women’s education. The phrase “good wife and wise mother” presents the proposition that women should contribute to the nation-state as (gendered) citizens by helping their fathers and

husbands at home and by raising children to be loyal subjects of the emperor. Although it undeniably invoked Confucian ideals of women's virtue, the idea of achieving citizenship through being a homemaker and mother—by providing a direct linkage between the state and the family—is complicit with, and necessary to, the modern industrial capitalist state and its gendered arrangements for production and reproduction. The figure of the good wife and wise mother was meant to consolidate a new class of bourgeois (and petit bourgeois) families.¹⁸

Under the 1899 directive, women's secondary education was incorporated into the state-regulated public education system. The law stipulated that at least one public women's normal school be established in each prefecture. Under the new regulations, the school curriculum added a new emphasis on scientific and efficient home management, including hygiene, saving, and household accounting, in addition to a range of gender-specific skills and bodies of knowledge that constituted a new middle-class female sociality and forms of social distinction, including sewing, cooking, flower arrangement, and so on. At the same time, a series of everyday school routines, including the recitation of the Imperial Rescript on Education, was meant to ensure loyalty to the emperor.

As a result, although there were 37 women's secondary schools (out of which only nine were public) in 1899, by 1915 the number rose to 143, with 20,117 students, constituting 5 percent of the total female population (Kôtô jogakkô kenkyûkai 1994:25–26). Even more importantly, the new regulations dovetailed with the economic transformation after the Sino–Japanese War. Between the Russo–Japanese War and World War I, the postwar boom accelerated industrialization and urbanization and ultimately precipitated the full-fledged formation of a new middle class in urban areas. Surplus laborers in the rural areas flowed into the growing cities, including Tokyo, as job-seeking wage workers. At the same time, a new managerial-professional class began to appear. These functionaries and their families particularly embodied the social relations of the new middle class, characterized by the nuclear family, the spatial separation of work and home, and the gendered division of labor between production and reproduction. Women's education had to respond to an increasing demand for educated wives and mothers for the new middle-class salaried masses.¹⁹

Linguistic Modernity and the Auditory Construction of the Other

The acoustic presence of the schoolgirl was represented by how she ended her utterances. Meiji intellectuals focused on the verb-ending forms, such as *teyo*, *dawa*, *koto-yo*, *wa*, *chatta*, *noyo*.²⁰ Glossed as *gobi* or *kotobajiri* (meaning the end or the tail of words or utterances), verb-ending forms are “metapragmatically salient”²¹ in the sense that unlike other structural parts of language, they are formally segmentable and extractable from the rest of the utterance. Pragmatic effect is thus formally locatable in the segmented form, which makes speakers more aware of linguistic forms and functions. Such a conscious knowledge in turn allows the speaker reflexively to *use* this knowledge

by objectifying and describing the given speech form and generating narratives about it (professional scholarly linguistic theory—an institutionalized narrative of language—is, of course, not an exception because it is not autonomous from its social formation).

Although metapragmatic salience accounts for a structural ground for focusing attention on verb-ending forms, the key question is how this structural factor articulated with a particular historical moment. The motivation to act on this structural possibility is found in the historical processes of Japan's modernity and modernization, in which the consolidation of women as a category of alterity was a necessary condition for the modern Japanese subject. The metapragmatic construction of women's language underwrites a specific way in which alterity comes into the auditory realm, where the boundary between language and nonlanguage is contingent on a semiotic order that is functional for social formations in general and to the historical specificities of Japanese modernity in particular.

Michel de Certeau's (1984, 1988) sustained discussion of colonial historiographies in the New World is helpful here, for it exemplifies a semiotic strategy for the containment of alterity that parallels the issue of Japanese women's language. He argues that imperial "writing" in the context of the New World was interchangeable with colonizing power. Writing entails a scriptural operation that collects and classifies information on exteriority or alterity and transforms it in a way that conforms to the systems of domination that writing caters to, including, as de Certeau asserts, science, the modern city, industry, and, more generally, modern political-economic institutions. Writing is, thus, "capitalist and conquering" (de Certeau 1984:135).

Essential to the working of a scriptural economy is the immutable separation that materializes in the text between its exteriority or alterity and its textual identity, whereby "writing" separates yet contains and thus conquers the other, whether this is a racial minority, "primitives," women, children, or the working class. This sense of writing approximates Benedict Anderson's (1983) discussion of the role of a vernacular "print language" in the rise of nationalism and the modern nation-state. Through the mediation of its semiotic structure, which may take concrete form through modern representational genres such as the novel and the newspaper, the individual comes to learn a sense of belonging to the nation-state. Thus, the import of print language lies not so much in its symbolic dimension (symbolizing, for example, the unity of a community), nor in its iconic dimension (where a unified form of language rationalizes a unified community),²² but in its *indexical* dimension—its mobility and mediality, its traffic in "shifters."²³ Print language works as an archetype of tele-technology, which spatially and temporally displaces, transports, and circulates events and ideas in an expanding and socially colonizing market of print capitalism.²⁴ It is an institutionalized process of dislocating and relocating the text, or of entextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization.²⁵ In this process, novels and newspapers exemplify a specific mode of narrative that structurally positions the narrator, as the agent of tele-technology, as

a rational and objective observer and spokesperson describing what is narrated. This subject position, as Benjamin Lee (1997) so eloquently argues, forges a specifically modern subjectivity inhabited by the citizen of the imagined national community that necessarily has its outside or others, even when these are internal. The construction of modern subjectivity is constituted in relation to an alterity—the other is not an accidental by-product but is a necessary condition for the modern self.

Narrative structure as in the novel, for example, makes it possible formally to distinguish self from other by the use of framing devices such as quotation and “reported speech”²⁶—the only way by which the other can “speak” in the text.²⁷ The notion of civil society as anonymous and blind to difference is made possible by masking the utter exclusion of those who are other to the bourgeois male. Likewise, modern textual space is seemingly “civil” by allowing a formally delimited space where the other is permitted to speak (as “different but equal”). This textual practice parallels the fetishism of capitalism. Just as labor and social relations are reified in capitalist society, the voice of alterity represented in print language is also stripped of its history and material agency and put on public display, incessantly dislocated, circulated, and subjected to the consuming gaze.

When alterity “speaks” in reported speech, it is no longer the speaker who is speaking. As de Certeau (1986:53) reminds us, the logic of a scriptural economy is one of “displacements and distortions” (cf. Bakhtin 1981).²⁸ What makes reported speech sound as if the other were truly speaking is the institutionalization of the historical relationship between quoting and quoted. To put it differently, it is this “metaleptic split” (Sakai 1996:196–202) that allows reported speech to pass for “speech,” a vocal event that actually took place in the past. Reported speech creates an “author function” (Foucault 1977), an illusion of a real person speaking by assigning the grammatical subject (“I”) to the (constructed and objectified) subjectivity of the person quoted. Reported speech, when made possible and appropriated by projects of modernity, is a powerful linguistic apparatus to conquer alterity and thus to consolidate the modern self.

Japan had its emergent moment of linguistic modernity at the turn of the century through a cluster of language modernization movements called *gembun'itchi*. These language reforms introduced those textual strategies and formal apparatuses described above, including the form of reported speech formally separating self and other and the development of language as a tele-technology to cite, dislocate, and relocate the ephemeral voice of the other. Various agents of modernization sought to create a modern standard Japanese language for their own ends, to rationalize it as a medium for government, education, law, commerce, print capitalism, and the military, as well as to make it a unifying medium for the spiritual bond of the nation. For the literary community, which eventually led the *gembun'itchi* movement, a new language and a new literary genre (i.e., narrative prose) were necessary to represent a (new) modern Japanese subjectivity. *Gembun'itchi* means “unifying

speech and writing.” Emulating the European realist novels, *gembun’itchi* writers sought to create a new mode of language by experimenting with colloquial-based writing styles. This resulted in a new conception of language that gave primacy to “speech” as the epistemological basis of language for its immediacy and present-ness and its presumed unmediated access to “truth” and “reality” through which the inner self of the modern subject (and the modern world he lived in) could be transparently and faithfully represented. The crux of this new language ideology lies, however, in its trick of *indexical inversion*: it actively constructs the very reality that it claims to be representing. Directly reporting the speech of the other became a textual device made possible by the realist imperative of verisimilitude, and the voice of the narrator became, in turn, an authoritative presence that through “giving voice,” silently reports, dislocates, and, thereby, constitutes it as other.²⁹

Recognizing quotation as a textual strategy of containment and as the only means by which alterity—otherwise suppressed and excluded—can return to the text, de Certeau further argues that the intra-textual hierarchy between the quoting and the quoted has to do with the way the latter is reduced to mere phonic matter—voice, scream, cry, grunt, or noise—that which is not capable of signifying by itself. This sense of sound is precisely what Saussure’s (1959) concept of “sound” (phoneme) precludes. The phoneme is part of a system of language. Therefore it is essentially *negative* in the sense that only the difference between one sound and another makes meaning. Phonic matter, as a material substance, is an extension or marker of the physical proximity of the body.³⁰ Whereas *his* language (modern/standard/written Japanese) is neither bound by space nor time, *her* language (speech) “never leaves the place of its production. In other words, *the signifier cannot be detached from the individual or collective body*. It cannot be exported. Here speech is the body which signifies” (de Certeau 1988:216; see also Adorno 1990).

Referring to Jean de Léry’s 16th-century ethnographic writing on the Tupinamba, an Amazonian native people, de Certeau describes how Léry’s ear (in addition to, but independently of, his eye, which discovered them as exotic and spectacular) heard their speech as “poetic” sound. De Certeau thus notes: “The suppression of the native’s effective uncanniness corresponds to the replacement of his exterior reality by a voice. This is a familiar displacement. The other returns in the form of ‘noises and howls,’ or ‘softer and more gracious sounds.’ These ghostly voices are blended into the spectacle to which the scriptural operation has reduced the Tupi” (de Certeau 1988:231). Reduced to pure sonorous properties with no signifying ability, alterity is then represented by writing for “exactly what is heard but not understood, hence ravished from the body of productive work: speech without writing, the song of pure enunciation, *the act of speaking without knowing*—a pleasure in saying or in hearing” (1988:227; emphasis added). Alterity thus speaks but does so without knowing what she is saying. She cannot signify by herself and therefore possesses neither objective knowledge nor truth, a position that de Certeau refers to as “fable” “To define the position of the other (primitive, religious, mad, childlike, or

popular) as fable is not merely to identify it with 'what speaks' (*fari*), but with a speech that 'does not know' what it says" (1984:160).

The kernel working at the core of linguistic modernity reduces alterity to an ephemeral acoustics with neither mobility nor signifying power and thereby translates it into a "message." This sense-making process is governed only by the one who does the citing. De Certeau concludes: "We have thus a first image of the voice simultaneously 'cited' (as before a court of law) and 'altered'—a lost voice, erased even within the object itself (the fable) whose scriptural construction it makes possible" (de Certeau 1984:161). To cite is, thus, to alter.

Such an intratextual hierarchy inherent in linguistic modernity is sustained by layers of dichotomies that effectively isolate alterity: writing and orality, past and present,³¹ truth and fable, citing and the cited, the subject and object of writing. And these binaries are projected on the historical and social construction of gender, class, and race.³² For example, we can think of the history of how hysteria became gendered as a female abnormality and treated in "appropriately" gendered ways. A woman's "hysterical" verbal language is dismissed as split and incoherent and is considered to bear no signifying faculty. The (male) analyst then "listens" to her bodily symptoms, and these can make sense only through the analyst's diagnostic exegesis built upon the language of modernity.

Michael Warner's study of the cultural meaning of printing in the construction of the public sphere in 18th-century America similarly illustrates the reduction of the other to sonorous properties. Warner draws on Maryland physician Alexander Hamilton's visit to New York City in the early 1740s, where he was amused to hear and record the encounter between his black slave, Dromo, and a Dutch-speaking black woman. He examines how Hamilton recorded the "fragmented" and "incomplete" speech (dialects) of the two women by quoting/citing them in his coherent narrative. The racial other of the elite white male was dissolved into "phonemic particularity"—illiterate, frivolous, and dialectal (Warner 1990:13–14). The key point is that this auditory construction of the racial other was the critical condition of cultural and political linkage between "printed-ness" and whiteness. The only way for the racial other to enter into the circulation of written discourse and therefore into the (white male bourgeois) public sphere was to be cited and quoted by a subject interpellated as both white and male.

As in de Certeau's "fable" and Warner's "phonemic particularity," alterity, once cited, is deprived of its semiotic capacity to provide itself with *metalanguage* (an authoritative representation of what the cited voice means). The epistemic violence of linguistic modernity lies, therefore, not so much in its erasure of what the other is saying but in the exclusion of what that other is saying about what he or she said.

The metapragmatic containment of the schoolgirl embodies a similar process. Key to this in the historical specifics of modernizing Japan is its linkage with the structural specificity of verb-ending forms. As explained above, the schoolgirl's voice was represented typically not through what she said but

how she said it. And this pragmatic effect was located and identified in her verb-ending forms. Verb-ending forms are *nonreferential* in that they do not contribute to the semantic meaning of the utterance.³³ For example, regardless of which verb-ending form is attached to the end of the utterance “*dawa*” or “*noyo*,” the propositional value of the utterance is not affected.

In addition to their being propositionally insignificant, it is important to note that verb-ending forms are syntactically positioned at the end of utterances and phrases and are attached mainly to verbs and auxiliary verbs but also to nouns and adjectives. Because of the given syntactic position and its nonreferential nature, verb-ending forms are inherently unstable in terms of grammaticality: distinguishing between what counts as a verb-ending form and what does not, or whose verb-ending form counts as such and whose does not (in terms of the binary between the standard and the regional dialects), is a political task, handled in this case by authorities such as the National Language Research Institute (Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūsho). Verb-ending forms literally hang on the edge of an utterance, on the borderline between language and noise. Some endings are classified as language and others as cries, screams, voiced breath, other vocal registers, or at best, “dialects.” They do not mark meaning so much as the sheer materiality of the speaker’s voice, and they belong more to her body than to her language (or mind).³⁴

The focus of citation on the nonreferential part of schoolgirl utterance is, therefore, neither a mere historical accident nor a linguistic-structural inevitability. Reducing the cultural significance of her speech to its nonreferential aspect denies and represses her *referential* voice, her will to mean and signify something in a rational manner. This is precisely a way of turning her speech into a “fable”—she is speaking, but she does not know what she is saying. In fact, this referential void became a caricature of schoolgirl speech (as “nonsense”). One of the most frequently cited phrases attributed to schoolgirl speech is “*Yoku-(t)teyo, shiranai-wa*,” meaning “It is okay, I don’t care (or I don’t know),” or something that is equivalent to the presumably vacuous utterance “Whatever” in Valley Girl speech in America. As a speech act, the reporting of schoolgirl speech produces the pragmatic effect of irrationality, incoherence, and garrulousness that contributes all the more to the imposed indexical meanings of *teyo* and *dawa*. Alterity is, thus, tamed and contained not by being silenced but on the contrary by being allowed to be loquacious.

This reduction to mere sound is also an effect of the particular mode of listening on the part of male intellectuals. Unlike the normative communication model (common in many cases of alterity construction), there was no sense of direct exchange between the listener and the schoolgirl. As with Warner’s Alexander Hamilton, male intellectuals overheard and cited speech that was not addressed to them. The anonymous and detached objectivity of the male intellectual’s ear thus follows his likewise anonymous and objective gaze, as demanded by his subjective positioning in modern (Japanese) language. Baron Ishiguro embodies this position of both seeing and hearing in a passage dating from 1911:

In the old days, one used to be able to identify whether she is an artisan, the wife of a low-ranking samurai, or the wife of a lord, just by looking at the footwear left at the front door. But nowadays, the situation is such that even by clothing, much less footwear, one cannot easily tell what status her husband holds. Today, when you listen through the *fusuma* [paper sliding door] to a female guest talking in the living room, things are completely different from the old days. When you think that she is either a *samisen* [a three-stringed Japanese banjo] or a dance teacher, it surprisingly turns out that she is a wife of status. Or when you think that she is a dancing girl or an apprentice, she turns out to be a schoolgirl wearing purple *hakama* [a long pleated skirt worn over a kimono]. This is because order in language has been disappearing. [Ishiguro 1911:829]

Here is a communicative event without communication. The object of the gaze is similar to the prisoner in Jeremy Bentham's panopticon: "He is seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication" (Foucault 1979:200). Baron Ishiguro hears the woman without seeing her or verbally interacting with her. She registers in his text as an acoustic presence alone. This disembodied voice, which Michel Chion (1994:128–131, 1999) would call *acousmêtre* (sound without indication of its source), invites the listener to search for its owner and therefore begs for metapragmatic narratives about the identity of the speaker.

How, then, does a nonreferential form acquire "meaning"? There is no semantic origin from which certain analogical or etymological inference is possible. Speech that is overheard may not reveal how the pragmatic meaning of verb-ending forms emerges intersubjectively in an exchange between two speakers. My point is that the foundational (first) order of indexicality was to be discursively created by metapragmatic citation. The nonreferential part of speech is context bound, and meaning cannot be understood without knowledge of the place and time, the sociological biographies of the participants, and other contextual information regarding where the utterance was made. To cite or to quote is to remove the utterance from its original context and to deprive it of any indexical grounding. To cite speech, then, is inevitably to (re)create—and alter—the context in which the utterance makes sense indexically. In addition, treating speech more as inarticulate sound than as signs, by focusing more on the materiality and physicality of the voice than on the symbolic, renders it particularly susceptible to metapragmatic framings. Reduced to verb-ending forms and to sound and noise as opposed to the signification of meaning, schoolgirl speech makes sense only by the authority narrating and textualizing it. Just as the psychiatrist "listens" to the hysteric's body language, male intellectuals heard the bodily "female" symptoms that in themselves lacked any signification. Metapragmatic commentaries that framed and reported schoolgirl speech were, then, acts of manufacturing context—producing the social and cultural knowledge that gave indexical meaning to the given speech form, including a history (etymology and origin) of the form, a sociological and psychological profile of the speaker, and its pragmatic effects. As footprints index the presence of the person who left them or as smoke indicates the presence of a chimney nearby, there is always a sense of a time lag. Metapragmatic commentaries, which retroactively

manufacture the context or what the given speech form indexes, simulate this temporal effect and normalize the indexical relationship, as if the manufactured context had actually preceded the given speech form. They inevitably point to the (imagined) truth.

The Semiotics of “Unpleasant to the Ears”

Below, I analyze the metapragmatic commentaries on schoolgirl speech in the light of the semiotic strategies of containment by which it was regimented and converted from sound to sign (that is, as signifying vulgarity and commonness). My point here is not simply to catalogue how schoolgirl speech was cited and attributed with pragmatic meanings but to examine the logic of semiotic mediation and rationalization that underlies the metapragmatic narratives of the schoolgirl as the other of modern Japanese subjecthood.

In the imputed world of the linguistic, the nonreferential signifies as an index by pointing to some contextual feature of speech: demographic, cultural, social, psychological, cognitive, and so on. For example, the use of *teyo* sounds vulgar because it is used by prostitutes. Or *teyo* is vulgar because it is not “grammatical” (and nongrammatical use of language is commonly heard among the “lower classes”). Thus the form, which does not generate a meaning by itself, needs to be latched on to an existing indexical relationship (“prostitutes are vulgar”), a metonymical or metaphorical extension in which *teyo* points toward a particular association. An “order” of indexicality is manufactured by connecting *teyo* to a semiotic chain of associations that link it to vulgarity, the “lower classes,” the figure of the prostitute, and back again; and it is this indexical order that enables speech forms to function indexically. A particular social, cultural, and psychological domain (class, gender, region, affect, stance, and so on) becomes in this way a coded way to signify another domain. Thus, metapragmatic framing and citing crafts a foundational narrative that rationalizes and naturalizes a causal and self-enclosed circuit of meanings to the extent that the given speech form—for example, *teyo*—is fetishized as if there were some essential quality of vulgarity intrinsic to it.³⁵

This is a critical part of the process by which speech reduced to inarticulate sound/noise is (re)organized and socialized into an indexical sign. For the Meiji intellectuals to analyze (i.e., to indexicalize) the schoolgirls’ speech was a “strategy of containment” (Jameson 1981:10): The schoolgirl is turned from an unbridled, unknown other, exterior to the discourse of modernity, into a knowable and familiar Other by structuring her (voice) into the *margin* of the economy of difference so that her identity makes sense (to the male intellectual) only as systematic difference from the center.³⁶

Origin Narratives of Vulgarity

One of the earliest commentaries on schoolgirl speech appeared in 1888 in a women’s magazine, *Kijo no tomo* (The lady’s friend). This short essay, titled “Vogue Speech,” was by Ozaki Koyo, one of the best-known Meiji writers.

In it he notes: “I do not remember exactly when, but for the last eight or nine years, girls in a primary school have been using strange language in their conversation among themselves.” He then lists the following examples of what he refers to as the “strange” speech of schoolgirls (see Figure 1).

Ozaki continues:

In the last five or six years even those girls in the girls’ high school have acquired such speech, and it has even reached the society of noblewomen. The strange speech that schoolgirls use today was formerly used by the daughters of the low-class samurai [*gokenin*] in the Aoyama area before the Meiji Restoration. Thoughtful ladies must not let a beautiful jewel become damaged or a polished mirror become clouded by using such language. [Ozaki 1994:4–5]

Ozaki Koyo’s comments on schoolgirl speech echo those by numerous other educators and intellectuals in pointing out its “dubious” origins and vulgar sounds, deploring its spread among middle- and even upper-class women, and urging educators and parents to discourage it because *how* one speaks is *who* one is (and vice versa).

Other commentators, like Ozaki, identify specific locations, including “the seedy section of Ushigome” (*Reijôsaikun no kotoba* 1896:148) or “low-class” neighborhoods in the city of Tokyo. Origin narratives by the male elite commonly point to the “pleasure quarters” in the city of Tokyo and geisha of various sorts, including apprentices and prostitutes, as the origin of teyo-dawa speech. Teyo-dawa speech was, thus, identified as a form of private speech that spread (as a form of contamination) to the more presentable and bourgeois segments of the society. Takeuchi Kyuichi (1857–1916), a famous sculptor, observed:

As to the question of how such private speech used in the geisha house came to permeate the upper-class family and became the common speech of respectable mothers and daughters: there are a number of former geisha among the wives of now powerful people who became influential as meritorious retainers at the time of the Meiji Restoration. Many other women with whom such women (former geisha wives) interact and closely socialize also have the same previous occupational [geisha] background. They use such speech as *ii(n)-dayo* [“It is okay”] or *yoku-(t)teyo* [“That’s fine”], even to their children. Then, those children acquire such speech and start using it outside their home. That’s how speech such as *atai* [“I”] and *yoku-(t)teyo* [“That’s fine”] became common usage today. I think this observation would probably not prove wrong. In support of my theory, it was around the time when the offspring of “the ex-geisha-now-upper-class wives” started going to school that such speech became prevalent. [Takeuchi 1907:24–25]

Baron Ishiguro Tadaatsu (1911:29) makes a similar point about geisha married to men of status in the time of social upheaval during the Meiji Restoration when it was not considered shameful to have a geisha as a wife. This was how, he explains, the vulgar speech of the “seedy” section of town spread among upper-class women. In addition, he claims that women from the countryside contributed to the spread of teyo-dawa speech by misconstruing it as the noble language of the upper class and emulating it. Other commentators

Ume wa mada "Plum trees do not yet bloom"	sa-ka-naku (t)te-ye ['bloom'-not-teye]
Ara mō "Oh dear, they did already bloom"	sa-(k)i-ta-moye ['bloom'-(past tense)-moye]
Ara mō "Oh dear, they did already bloom"	sa-(k)i-teyo* ['bloom'-(past tense)-teye]
Sakura no hana wa mada "It certainly looks that cherry blossoms will not yet have bloomed"	sa-ka-nai-n(o)-dawa ['bloom'-not-dawa]
*As I will discuss later, teyo is attached to a renyō form. The renyō form could be ambiguous in terms of tense because it does not contain grammatical information on tense. In other words, one cannot tell by the verb-phrase itself about its tense. I translated this example as a past tense because of the adverbial, mō, meaning "already."	

Figure 1
List of schoolgirls' vulgar speech forms cited by Ozaki Koyo.

suggest that the 1899 Directive on Women's High Schools opened the door for the daughters of "the lower class"—meaning wealthy merchants and regional landowners³⁷—to make inroads into girls' high schools and to influence the daughters of the middle and upper classes.

Whether it was the daughters of low-class samurai or the geisha, these origin narratives are symptomatic of a sense of moral panic over social unrest and the collapse of the traditional social order. The commentators felt or (perhaps more appropriately) "heard" it through their auditory senses—social change coming not from the top but from the bottom of the society (class, gender, and regional peripheries). Their familiar social order of class, gender, and the associated spatial boundaries such as those between private and public was collapsing around them. In the male intellectuals' metapragmatic narratives, this moral unease focused on the figure of the woman in the lower-class, seedy section of town married to gain upper-class status, her speech spreading among upper-class ladies as a source of contamination. To begin with, it was outrageous for them to "hear" women in public space at all. This does not mean that there were no women allowed in public prior to Meiji. On the contrary, one can imagine the abundant presence of women—"working" women on the street, in the market, and other public "work" places. It was the particular kind of women who were supposed to be confined at home whose voices a keen observer could now hear in public places. A distinction among women formerly functioned as the sign that separated the private and the public—upper-class women and public commercial women were never supposed to share the same space. So not only were the private and public spheres collapsing into one another with modernization but the traditional social hierarchy itself was coming apart. The violation of the normative spatial boundary between private and public also mixed the social rules of the informal and the formal. As another anonymous author explains, using the analogy of bodily posture, "the speech in vogue among schoolgirls is one that comes out of their mouths while lying down [relaxed] and not while sitting upright [formal]" (*Gengo no daraku* 1906:1–2).

The Iconization of Vulgarity: The Imaginary Trace of Linguistic Erasure

Although the vulgarity of teyo-dawa speech was rationalized through its *indexical* (metonymic) relations with the geisha, vulgarity was also claimed for schoolgirl speech through its lack of honorifics.³⁸ This “lack” or “absence” was attributed to “sloppiness,” “laziness,” or “impudence,” signifying to male elites the schoolgirls’ moral corruption and degeneration. For example, in an essay titled “The Corruption of Language” (*Gengo no daraku* 1906:1–2), the author deplored the use of “Sô-desu” [It is so] as omitting an honorific form. “Desu” is a “polite” verb-ending form that appeared during the gembun’itchi movement as one of the standard speech/writing forms. The author claimed that schoolgirls should say “Sô-de-gozai-masu” [It is so], a form of honorific that encodes proper deference by a woman. This and other similar commentaries attempted to invoke the imaginary trace of the schoolgirl lazily skipping honorific forms and to recognize a simple “desu” as a failure (intentional or otherwise) to use the deferential form.

Another anonymous author writes in 1892:

Recently, a kind of language use is in vogue among schoolgirls. There are countless examples, such as *nasutte*, [did? or have done?], which should be *nasari-mashita-ka* [did? or have done?]; or *i-(t)teyo* [I have gone], which should be *Yuki-mashita-yo*. [*Kotobazukai* 1892:74]

Nasu-(t)te is an adverbial inflectional form of the verb *nasa-ru*,³⁹ the polite form of the verb *suru* (“do”) with *te*, a conjunctive suffix. An interrogative utterance that ends with *te*, which is necessarily conjugated with an adverbial inflectional form, is another linguistic property that the Meiji intellectuals identified as teyo-dawa speech.⁴⁰ The commentary above rationalized the linguistic corruption of schoolgirls by identifying the expression *nasu-(t)te* as a *failed* form of the polite form *nasari-mashita* in that it lacks the polite auxiliary verb *mashita* (*masu* [polite auxiliary verb] + *ta* [past tense]). In other words, the author sees the imaginary trace of the schoolgirls’ “lazy” act of skipping honorific forms. One author claims that this kind of omission is caused by their speaking too fast. Note that the verb *nasaru* itself already encodes a higher degree of deference than the verb *suru*. The same logic works in the latter example, *i-(t)teyo*. This lack of honorifics is associated with not only rudeness but in this case, the fact that this linguistic form is considered the *contracted* form of *yuki-mashita-yo*,⁴¹ which by an iconic analogy bespeaks indolence and laziness.⁴² In other words, linguistic corruption is rationalized not only by its pragmatic effect of “rudeness” but more importantly in this case, by its grammatical iconicity of “contraction.”

The “laziness” of the schoolgirl is also “evidenced” by phonological contraction. For example, an article on schoolgirl speech (*Jogakusei kotoba* 1905) published in *Yomiuri Shimbun*, a popular newspaper, listed the verb-ending *chatta*. Tanahashi Junko explains that such contraction (*chatta*) is caused by speaking too fast. She thus notes: “Speech with a rising intonation, or speaking

with the ending contracted like bouncing, gives people an unpleasant impression. Speech would sound more feminine and refined if one speaks gently with the ending slightly falling" (Tanahashi 1911:54).

Syntactic ambiguity is also mobilized as evidence of the schoolgirl's linguistic corruption. The verb-ending form *teyo* is particularly susceptible to this semiotic rationalization. As I mentioned above, *te* (as in *teyo*) functions something like a connective suffix attached to the adverbial inflected form,⁴³ connecting the verb (or adjective) to which *te* is attached to another (auxiliary) verb, or linking multiple phrases and clauses, among which *te* establishes a temporal as well as other types of relations. For example, *tabe* (to eat)- *te*, *neru* (to sleep) would be "to eat *and* sleep." When the predicate ends with a *te*, as in *teyo*, the sentential level of meaning gets suspended and made incomplete. In fact, the adverbial inflected form is sometimes called "suspended form" (Sakuma 1936). It is as though one ended a sentence with "and. " Furthermore, the verb with *te* attached to it does not encode tense or mood. Without subsequent tense-marking devices such as auxiliary verbs, adverbs, or phrases, tense is unknown. Such structural ambiguity was rationalized by the modernizers as the linguistic alterity of the schoolgirl.

In his essay "The Reform of Teyo-Dawa Speech," Yanagihara Yoshimitsu observed:

The recent speech of Tokyo has spread from the pleasure quarters to the upper class and has become habitual. For example, like *iyada-wa*, *ikenai-wa*, or *nani-nani-shi-teyo* and etc., girls heavily abuse *wa*, *teyo*, and so on.^[44] What is even more outrageous is that they use *nasu(t)te* when they mean to say *nasaru-ka* [Are you going to do such-and-such?], and thus they shamelessly mistake the past tense for the future tense (and this is called "low-class language"). [Yanagihara 1908:14]

Yanagihara claimed that girls incorrectly used *nasutte*. He asserts that *nasutte* is the past tense, whereas the schoolgirls, he claims, use it for the future tense, for example, "Are you going to do such-and-such?" His rationalization derives from morpho-syntactic ambiguity in that *nasutte* could be either the past or the future tense and furthermore, from the fact that both the past-tense-marking auxiliary verb *ta* and connective suffix *te* take the same adverbial inflectional form. Whereas Yanagihara heard *nasutte* as the past tense, it could also well be the future tense. As much as the schoolgirls' use of *nasutte* is considered "ungrammatical" by male authorities such as Yanagihara, his commentary in turn exhibits, to use Michael Silverstein's (1981) term, his own "limits of awareness" of linguistic structure.

Women Reading, Speaking, and Learning

Along with the lack of honorifics, phonological contraction, and "strange" verb-ending forms such as *teyo* and *dawa*, the elite commentators also deplored the schoolgirls' presumed use of Chinese words (*kango*) and English words as "unpleasant to the ear" (*kikigurushii*). Both *kango* and English were the distinctive province of the educated male elite, and they were disturbed by

hearing “the male language”—their “own” language—spoken by a *female* voice. The schoolgirls’ mimicry of this language (*kango* and *keigo*), in what Bhabha calls (1990:291) “the uncanny fluency of another’s language,” produced the effect of “sounds familiar but totally strange” to the ear of the male intellectual. Just as teyo-dawa speech was not so much about what the schoolgirls said but how they said it, the schoolgirls’ use of *kango* and English was understood not in terms of content but in terms of “the sound of it,” as unmediated language, something that begs for metapragmatic commentary yet at the same time exceeds metapragmatic containment.

What made this speech particularly “unpleasant” was its transgression of the speech-gender nexus. *Kango*, or words of Chinese origin, had been traditionally used for specialized texts in commerce, law, and administration and thus had been exclusively associated with the (elite) male writing style. The women of this class were expected to use *wabun*, or traditional Japanese writing limited to writing letters, diaries, and epistles. With the establishment of women’s secondary schools, women for the first time had legitimate access to *kango* as part of their school curriculum. But commentators urged schoolgirls to use expressions of Japanese origin (as opposed to Chinese); Japanese expressions were considered to be naturally feminine because, the commentators would explain tautologically, they sound more elegant and soft.⁴⁵ In a way similar to Chinese-origin words, English words were claimed as male in a gendered monopoly of access to, and assimilation and mimicry of, Western modernity and modernization. However, many of the first private girls’ schools were founded by Christian missionaries, and English was part of the curriculum to enlighten and to civilize Japanese women. Schoolgirls’ use of English words was cited (and often caricatured) as the epiphany of *haikara* (high-collar) or the modern.

The experience of hearing “his” language spoken by schoolgirls was doubly uncanny: he had to hear written language—*kango* and English—in oral speech and he had to hear it in a female voice. Using *kango* in conversation was reflexively stereotyped as the speech style of male high school and university students and was referred to as *shosei kotoba* (male student’s speech). “Esoteric” and “bookish,” *kango*-mixed language was the language used to talk about politics, economics, and world affairs. Many commentators were scandalized by the fact that the schoolgirls spoke *shosei kotoba*, mimicking masculine speech mannerisms. In fact, this male-student-like speech was cited in one of the earliest instances of reported schoolgirl speech, which appeared in 1885 in a short biography in *Jogaku Zasshi*, a women’s magazine. By 1887, however, as Masuko Honda (1990:113–118) notes, the same author had started using teyo-dawa speech to represent the dialogue of schoolgirls.

Let us listen to the scandalized commentators: Ogino Hajime observed: “Nothing is so unpleasant to hear and unsightly to see as women using *kango*” (Ogino 1896:4). An anonymous writer to a women’s magazine commented: “It is extremely unpleasant to the ear to hear women use *kango*. It sounds man-like. It sounds impertinent. When you see them talking in so-called Western

language and walking at a late hour of the night, it looks as though high-spirited young men [*sôshi*] were dressed in women's clothes" (*Onna tachi no kotoba bumi kotoba* 1892:66–67).⁴⁶ Ogino wrote: "Whereas she should say 'Makoto ni kawai^o desu' [It really is pitiful], she says 'Jitsuni renbin desu' [It really is pitiful]. It goes without saying which is more gentle and modest for women's language use" (Ogino 1896:4–5). Though they say exactly the same thing, *kango* words (*jitsuni* [really], *renbin* [pitiful]) are used in the latter sentence. What was even more disturbing was the woman's use of both *kango* and teyo-dawa speech all in one breath. An anonymous author deplored the fact that he occasionally heard ladies of the middle class and above mixing (*chanpon*) the vulgarity and crudeness of teyo-dawa speech with the esoteric words of *kango* (*Reijôsaikun no kotoba* 1896:148).

Women Reading: Novels and Newspapers

The schoolgirls' use of vulgar speech such as *teyo* and *dawa* as well as the masculine language of *kango* was also attributed to their access to novels and newspapers. Ogino (1896:4) claimed that schoolgirls learned *kango* from reading newspapers and novels; others claimed that is where they learned teyo-dawa speech. What they mainly referred to as the novel, however, was the domestic novel, in which the main character was often a young woman. Writer Uchida Roan (1984:179) scornfully called it "the *yoku*-(t)teyo novel" because of the perceived excessive use of the teyo-dawa speech in dialogues. In an essay titled "The Schoolgirl's Language" (*Jogakusei no gengo* 1905:197), the author maintained that the schoolgirl learned and spoke vulgar speech as a result of reading such fiction. The author of another essay titled "The Corruption of Language" argued that the schoolgirl spoke the vulgar speech because she had been "carried away by the pen of the novel writer" (*Gengo no daraku* 1906:2). It should be noted that the domestic novel had not initially been "gendered," and readers were both men and women. As Iida (1998) points out, however, as the novel form gained the status of the textual genre of modernity, it underwent a process of becoming "masculine." The domestic novel was carved out as a subgenre of the novel. It was severed from the mainstream novel, feminized as "sentimental," and was thus excluded from the public sphere—that is, from the realm of serious fiction.⁴⁷

Social crisis is indexical crisis. As much as metapragmatic comments allow one to imagine the expansive figure of the schoolgirl learning, reading, and speaking (out!), what also emerges is the figure of the male intellectual deeply disturbed by the familiar social, cultural, class, and gender boundaries becoming blurred, transgressed, and nullified. The kind of indexical order male intellectuals knew seemed no longer to work. They "heard" the loss of the primordial social order of the pre-Meiji Restoration and the anticipated chaos and crisis of social change. This change may well have been heard as an "other" modernity, one that was led not by him, but by *her*, and one that would not come from the top (from the elite ex-samurai or the aristocrat) but from the

bottom and from the periphery, or from the lower class, the seedy sections, the rural regions, and most uncannily, women.

The signifying chain of teyo-dawa speech does not close at “the schoolgirl” and her alleged linguistic corruption as the final signified: it ultimately points to and signifies the figure of the elite male and his experience of the perceived drastic social change understood as modernity or modernization at the turn of the century. What ideologically motivated a set of speech forms, attitudes, and behavior to constitute the discrete metapragmatic category of teyo-dawa speech (and to signify the schoolgirl) was not so much that actual schoolgirls spoke that way so much as it was that a collective sense of disquietude was experienced by the male elite at the turn of the century over the perceived collapse of the familiar social and moral order and the particular temporality modernity names as “progress.” Teyo-dawa speech came to reference not so much her but *his* experience of Japanese modernity. In the face of *his* perceived social crisis, woman turns into a sign—signifying anything but herself. Ultimately and paradoxically, teyo-dawa speech points its arrow back to the male intellectual himself.

The Return of Voice and the Construction of the Listening Subject

In a way, the scene of male intellectuals drawn to the schoolgirl’s voice rehearses Althusser’s (1971:174) image of a man hailed by a police officer and thereby interpellated as an acting subject in the ideological regime the officer embodies. To stop and follow orders is to reproduce the authority of the state. The male intellectuals were hailed by the schoolgirl’s voice. As much as the schoolgirl came into being as a speaking subject through the ear of the male intellectual, the male listener was simultaneously constructed as the (listening) subject through his experience of hearing her voice. But what exactly was it in her voice that performed an act of hailing, given the fact that she never directly addressed him and he simply overheard her? What exactly did he hear in the schoolgirl’s voice? Here we need to look at her voice as a *psychic object*, the quality of which exceeds indexicalization.⁴⁸ However much male intellectuals attempted indexically to contain her voice as vulgar and low-class, this “unpleasantness to the ear” could never be fully contained in the system of language. There is always a residue or excess that is irreducible to language and meaning, inconvertible into the signified, and not necessarily linguistically present and presentable. Slavoj Žižek observes: “Voice is that which, in the signifier, resists meaning, it stands for the opaque inertia that cannot be recuperated by meaning” (Žižek 1996:103). This “fantastic ghost,” to use de Certeau’s (1988:250) word, returns and haunts the male intellectual and potentially disrupts the plentitude of his identity as the embodiment of “Japan” and “the modern,” exposing the extent to which its subjectness is inherently fractured and unstable.

The certitude of modernity often necessitates a temporal and spatial alignment of gender that both symbolically and materially positions men as the initiators of the modern and the present and women as the guardians of tradition

and the (uncontaminated) past. The schoolgirl's voice is "unpleasant to the ears" because it disrupts such an alignment, for she is "female" *and* "modern." "Female-and-yet-modern," as an index of inauthenticity and illegitimacy, is, however, precisely the expression that characterizes Japan's (male) modernity in its relation to Western modernity: The former is (dis)located as spatially peripheral to, and temporally lagging behind, the West with its originality, authenticity, and centrality infinitely absent and unattainable. As with many instances in the historical formation of the relationship between the First World and non-Western and (post)colonial places, this decentering is projected onto gender relations both symbolically and materially. The figure of the schoolgirl embodying and performing a modernity from the periphery of the gender hierarchy in Japan thus repeats the figure of the Japanese male intellectual embodying and performing a modernity from the periphery of the national/racial hierarchy in the global context of geopolitics.

The schoolgirl's voice works as an "acoustic mirror" (Silverman 1988) or "auditory double" through which the male intellectual heard *his own* voice. As a psychic object, this voice becomes what Lacanian psychoanalysis refers to as *objet petite a*. The *objet petite a* is something that was part of the subject in the imaginary stage that is lost when it enters the symbolic (language). Jacques Lacan defines *objet petite a* as "something from which the subject, in order to constitute itself, has separated itself off as organ. This serves as a symbol of lack. . . . It must, therefore, be an object that is, firstly, separable and, secondly, that has some relation to the lack" (Lacan 1977:103). It was part of the subject, in psychoanalytic terms, but was separated from the subject as a *thing* as he/she entered the symbolic. This "little otherness" includes feces, mother's breasts, and among other things, the voice, or "the object voice" (Dolar 1996), particularly the mother's voice, with which the subject had unity as an infant.⁴⁹ In order for the subject to attain (imaginary) plenitude in the symbolic stage, the *objet petite a* (the lack) needs to be disavowed.⁵⁰ An encounter with the *objet petite a* in the symbolic stage therefore puts the subject into a crisis because he sees or hears himself as a thing, or sees or hears his uncanny double, and he is reminded of his incompleteness. In order to cope with it, the subject deploys a mechanism of "projection" (Silverman 1988:85), in this case, onto the female subject. In analyzing the male psychic response to the female voice in classic Hollywood cinema in these terms, Kaja Silverman (1990:81) argues that "the male subject later hears the maternal voice through himself—that it comes to resonate for him with all that he transcends through language" (Silverman 1988:81). Cinema as a patriarchal apparatus thus works in such a way that "his integrity is established through the projection onto woman of the lack he cannot tolerate in himself. The male subject 'proves' his symbolic potency through the repeated demonstration of the female subject's symbolic impotence" (Silverman 1988:24). Žižek also explains how *objet petite a* as the double is inevitably externalized because of the extent to which it is so similar but so strange: "This is why the image of a double so easily turns into its opposite, so that, instead of experiencing the radical otherness of his similar, the subject

recognizes himself in the image of radical otherness" (Zizek 2000:126). In the case of the Meiji male intellectual, such a psychic level of displacement of the internal other (*objet petit a*) into the external other (woman) took the form of converting the female voice into the sign through metapragmatic citational practice.

The schoolgirl's voice is "unpleasant-to-the ear" precisely because it is a (distorted) double of his voice, an object that returned from the prelinguistic stage (the real), when it was constitutive of the harmonious unity of the subject. Encountering his (auditory) double, or the little otherness in him, is a horrifying reminder that the subject is inherently split and insufficient and that the wholeness of the subject—in this particular case, Japan's male modern subject—is an impossible ideal. This is why the male intellectual had to convert the schoolgirl's voice into a sign metapragmatically in a way that made her the knowable other. It was an act of displacing (and projecting) the otherness that resides in him into the otherness of another subject (woman). I want to suggest here that it was himself, the displaced voice of himself, that the male intellectual heard when he heard the schoolgirl speaking. Her uncanny voice, heard partly as that of the other and partly as his own, exposes irresolvable ambivalence within the discourse of Japan's (male) modernity. The schoolgirl's voice *is* the male intellectuals' voice, or at least, the distorted double of his voice.⁵¹

By the end of World War I, the commentaries on schoolgirl speech as linguistic corruption had quickly dwindled. This corresponded not only with the increased enrollment of girls' high schools but also with the rapid development of mass culture, the industrial capitalist regime of family and gender relations as well as of class structure, and notably, an increasing confidence in Japan's male modernity in the form of adventurous colonial expansion in China and Korea. Various agents of consumer culture started "speaking" teyo-dawa speech to address young women as consumers. Advertisements in magazines for young women for cosmetics and hygiene products let the photo or illustration of a young woman—imaginable as a schoolgirl, a daughter of an aristocrat, or a young middle-class housewife—"speak" teyo-dawa speech (in the form of direct reported speech) to describe and point to a product. Teyo-dawa speech in advertisements thus came to signify the desired object on display in the magazines and at the same time, the desired subject who had access both to such an object and to the language (teyo-dawa speech) to describe it. More notably, however, real historical actors themselves started to claim teyo-dawa speech as their own. Readers' correspondence columns in some commercially savvy young women's magazines printed readers' letters peppered excessively with teyo-dawa speech. It came to be a key membership marker for the virtual community the magazines created.

By the 1930s, speech forms such as *teyo* and *dawa* had appeared in the model dialogues of urban middle-class and upper-middle-class women and had been resignified as a genuinely "feminine language," the language of the genuine Japanese woman.⁵² It is indeed remarkable that contemporary discourses on women's linguistic corruption have recurred at a time of perceived social

crisis and that the public deplors the loss of the language once condemned as vulgar and low-class, a “genuinely feminine” language that it never was.

Conclusion

This article has traced the way in which Japanese male intellectuals at the turn of the 20th century, the critical moment in the takeoff of Japan’s industrial capitalism and its attendant social and cultural formation, heard and cited the schoolgirl’s voice and in doing so, gave rise to the new metapragmatic category of “schoolgirl speech,” as well as “the schoolgirl” herself as a new social category. This was, in fact, the epistemic birth of “the modern Japanese woman.” Japanese women’s language at its emergence was occasioned by a never-ending process of citations, circulations, and dispersion of fragments of female voices in the newly formed publicity of print media. Essential to this process was the development of the tele-technology of the modern standard Japanese language in its ability to cite, dislocate, and relocate the ephemeral voice of the other.

Rather than assuming that the Meiji male intellectuals’ reported speech of the schoolgirl was a more or less “accurate” reflection of how she actually spoke, I have examined her reported speech as a product of the modern observer’s social practice of listening and citing, the specific mode of which is informed by the broader political-economic and historical context of modernizing Japan at the turn of the century. I have examined how the male elite crafted narratives of the indexical order of linguistic corruption of schoolgirl speech and how this metapragmatic practice was a form of strategic containment to domesticate competing forms of Japanese modernity and modernization, one of which the schoolgirl embodied and materialized. At the same time, however, as much as the schoolgirl’s voice was objectified by the male intellectual, the excess of her voice, so “unpleasant to the ear,” returns, reminding him that “the little other” that he projected onto the schoolgirl’s voice indeed resided in himself as the eternally split subject of Japan’s modernity.

Very often the experience of “modernity,” particularly in non-Western locations, is understood simply as an event at the periphery of an “original” Western modernity—as diffusion globally from “the center.” This article both questions the social reality of the Eurocentric assumption of global modernity and examines the effects of that assumption in a non-European context (see also Harootunian 2000; Pratt 2002; Rofel 1999). That modernities on the “periphery” have their own dynamics, contradictions, and syntheses can be apparent on two counts. First, although “vision” is the predominant trope and sensory channel by which modernity has been talked about and studied (see, e.g., Jay 1988 or Levin 1993), “listening” has been central here. Modernity (perhaps everywhere) is “heard” as well as “seen.” Second, through the ear of the male intellectual we “hear” *another* modernity—the one experienced by young women—and this suggests the need to recognize different and separate experiences of modernity, competing modernities that are gendered and classed.

This article also argues the need to recast the notion of “the speaking self” (and its accompanying ideas such as agency and resistance) within a framework of language and political economy. At stake here is a particular notion of the speaking subject—be it an individual or a group of individuals—as autonomous and self-consolidating. What is essentially a methodological-individualist take (assuming the autonomy and sovereignty of subjects) sometimes fails to deliver on what it purports to accomplish. In linguistic analysis, it often takes the form of conflating the grammatical subject (“I”) with the initiator of enunciation as “subject-as-agent” or “speaker-as-agent.” In this understanding of “I speak, therefore I am,” the speaker’s voice guarantees her full presence “here and now,” and the equation of the act of speaking with the expression of human agency is fundamental to a particular mode of linguistic constructionism to which we are tempted to subscribe on political and other grounds. We are keen to recover and restore the subaltern voice deeply buried in historical documents. In the case of the schoolgirl, we might be tempted to depict her as the subject-as-agent who actively crafts and asserts identity, heroically defying the patriarchal discourse with a clear oppositional consciousness and to claim that *she* constructs her identity through her practice using her sovereign body from which her voice emerges.⁵³ But such an approach proves to be ineffective when we look at the subject formation of those who, in the real world, cannot speak for themselves and cannot do so for at least three reasons.

First, I have illustrated how the male elite heard the schoolgirls by eavesdropping. Such an “illicit” and solipsistic mode of communication (which would also include today’s more technologically advanced and more explicitly power-laden acts of looking and listening, such as surveillance and wiretapping) complicates our familiar notion of communication, in which the speaking subjects of communication are mutually regarded and engaged and in which “understanding” is assumed to be a collaborative achievement (or failure) in *inter*-subjective dialogue.⁵⁴ How can we conceptualize subject formation in such a form of social relations of communication? How can we study “linguistic voyeurism,” where one is heard but one does not hear (or for that matter, *speak* in her own voice)?

This process is a good illustration of Foucault’s “discursive power,” in which the seemingly “objective” acts of “seeing” and “hearing” are in fact constitutive of—rather than neutrally receptive of—knowledge. “Madness,” for example, as Foucault explains, “no longer exists except as *seen*.” The science of mental disease, as it would develop in the asylum, would always be only of the order of observation and classification. *It would not be a dialogue*” (1965:250, cited in Jay 1993:391; emphasis added).⁵⁵ The same point can be made regarding the act of listening on the part of the Meiji intellectual—the emergence of “the schoolgirl” without any involvement of her intention or even verbal exchange with him.

Second, I have argued that teyo-dawa speech as heard and cited as such has no sovereign origin or authentic identity. It emerged in the incessant citations, mediations, and dissemination of fragments of voices heard and reified

as such by those who had access to the public sphere of the print media. And it was the circuit of citation and reported speech itself that performatively constructed the identity of the schoolgirl as the “original body” to which teyo-dawa speech belonged. Such a mode of existence of language defies our familiar sociolinguistic concentric model where the original speech emitted from its original speaking body diffused, through face-to-face communication, from the center to the periphery, like a wave or an epidemic disease on the basis of some sociopsychological determination. Even when historical actors themselves claimed or embodied teyo-dawa speech—as it was reified and cited—as their own (such as in the readers’ correspondence column), it was performatively accomplished as an effect by the regulated appropriation of that which was foreign to them.

Third, if there is any possibility of agency on the part of schoolgirls as historical actors in the auditory emergence of schoolgirl speech, it was the moment when their voices arrested the Meiji intellectuals and destabilized, at the psychic level, the certitude of the latter’s modern Japanese subjectivity by working as an acoustic mirror. Such a tacit yet tenuous psychic mode of agency and of the political resists the liberal notion of the (speaking) subject (Bhabha 1994:85–92, 102–122) and is critical for our understanding of linguistic subject formation. The figure of the lucid subject who is autonomous and self-consolidating, who masters language, speaks for herself/himself, founds knowledge, and constructs (and even “shifts” and “negotiates”) his or her identities, is problematic especially when it comes to the subject formation of those who have historically been disenfranchised as the other, such as women. As Spivak (1988) argues, we can not assume that “the other” can constitute herself and speak for herself in the same way as those at the center of the global political economy can. Similarly, invoking teyo-dawa speech as women’s authentic and original voice and as the locus of their untainted agency and pure consciousness fails to account for the role of broader discourses rooted in social formations in facilitating both the possibilities and limits of modes of agency, resistance, and subjectivity. In the case of schoolgirls, their voices were heard only by being represented and cited by those with access to the tele-technology of writing and print media, and what drew them to schoolgirls’ voices had to do with a significant political and economic transformation that Japan was experiencing as modernity and modernization. Teyo-dawa speech was not so much the sovereign voice of schoolgirls as it was the echo of the voice that the Meiji intellectuals had jettisoned in order to attain their plentitude as modern subjects. My analysis of the textual space of reported speech, made possible by a particular phase of Japan’s political–economic development, renders visible the semiotic mechanism by which the schoolgirl—the ambivalent icon of Japan’s modernity—was ventriloquized and ascribed voice, as if she were speaking for herself independently of the reporting voice. This is, of course, neither to argue that schoolgirls had no agency nor to abandon the notion of agency as a theoretical category. It is simply to suggest that understanding our political

possibilities of linguistic practice necessitates going beyond observable and tape-recordable “realities.”

So do you hear me? And *how* do you hear me?

Notes

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1. Throughout this article, I use the phrase “verb-ending forms” to refer to forms such as *teyo* and *dawa*, although they are also often classified as “final particles.” This is because morpho-syntactically, these forms can be broken further into smaller units, depending on which system of grammatical categorization one uses. For example, *teyo* could be classified as a final particle in one system but could also be classified as a compound form made up of *te* (a conjunctive suffix attached to an adverbial inflectional ending of a verb) and *yo* (a final particle), depending on which level of linguistic analysis one is using. In this article, I describe them as one unit (a verb-ending form) because that is how they were glossed by historical actors. A verb-ending form functions as a meta-communicative cue as to the speaker’s stance toward his or her prepositional statement.

2. See Ide 1982 and Shibamoto 1985 for classic studies of Japanese women’s language.

3. I want to emphasize that it is a *demographic* category, as opposed to a cultural or social category, for as this article shows, it was precisely the incessant citational practices that transformed a merely demographic category into a culturally meaningful one in its discursive connections with other culturally meaningful ideas, sites, and practices.

4. In 1890, there were 31 secondary schools (both public and private) for girls, with 3,120 enrolled students, constituting 0.09 percent of the female school-age population. In 1900, a year after the inauguration of the Directive on Girls’ High Schools, there were 52 girls’ secondary schools, with 11,984 enrolled students, or 0.38 percent of the female school-age population (percentages calculated from Monbushô [Ministry of Education] 1964:595, 607).

5. See Silverstein 1979, Rumsey 1990, Woolard and Schieffelin 1994, and Woolard 1998, for programmatic statements on the concept of language ideology.

6. The phrase “male intellectuals” is not to be taken as a demographic category but as a subject position in Japan’s modernity, into which both actual male intellectuals as well as others were interpellated. The observing male intellectual became an obligatory role for anyone who would represent modern Japan; therefore the metapragmatic commentaries printed and circulated at the turn of the century were authored predominantly by male authors who had access to the print media. More importantly, they were in the closest proximity to the structural position of the Japanese modern subject, allocated by

the discourse of modernity. My point is that male intellectuals as historical actors and those interpellated into this subject position are not automatically to be considered identical. Furthermore, the biographical or demographic sense of gender and gender as a structural position are not necessarily the same. It is the process in which real historical actors came to be the modern subject through their auditory experience of hearing schoolgirl voices that is the subject of this article. In fact, as shown below, a handful of elite nationalist female intellectuals and educators, including Shimoda Utako and Tanahashi Junko, had authority and access to the print media because of their complicit linkages with the state authorities. They equally condemned “schoolgirl speech” and advocated the reform of its linguistic corruption. The social power that operates in the citational and auditory construction of self and other is, therefore, far more complex than simply male versus female or the powerful versus the powerless. Schoolgirls came to be subjected to the social power of listening and citing, but their voice, in turn, threatened those who listened and cited because it reminded them of their unattainable plentitude—the condition of modern subjecthood, which was always “partial” and “not quite” (Bhabha 1994).

7. The term *schoolgirls* referred to girls and young women who attended women’s secondary schools (which were considered “higher” education for women) after finishing compulsory primary education—and this at a time when the majority of young women, because of family and economic realities, barely finished primary education. Schoolgirls were the daughters of the elite: landowners, wealthy farmers, government officials, capitalists, salaried workers, professors, career military officers, and other white collar professions. For example, a survey on fathers’ occupations that was conducted in one of the women’s schools in Tokyo in 1901 shows the results: government officials, 60; merchants, 39; bank employees, 19; landowners, 16; medical doctors, 13; school teachers, 11; industrialists, 10; professionals, 6; others, 14; no occupation, 61 (Fukey 1901).

8. Confucian readings on women’s virtues had served as primers for the daughters of samurai and wealthy merchants since the early Edo period (1603–1867). By the mid-Edo period, a large number of more accessible texts, called *ôraimono*, were widely circulated for private literacy education among commoners.

9. Notable in this regard was the appearance of a Japanese translation of John Stuart Mill’s 1869 work *The Subjection of Women* (see Fukama 1878).

10. Prior to 1874, however, several private women’s schools had already been founded by Christian missionaries.

11. Rikala Sato (1995) describes how a geisha was dressed as a schoolgirl and posed for a photograph.

12. Jean Baudrillard (1988) calls these phenomena—copies without originals—simulacra.

13. Debord declares: “In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation” (Debord 1977: para. 1).

14. Debord thus states: “One cannot abstractly contrast the spectacle to actual social activity: such a division is itself divided. The spectacle that inverts the real is in fact produced. Lived reality is materially invaded by the contemplation of the spectacle while simultaneously absorbing the spectacular order, giving it positive cohesiveness. Objective reality is present on both sides. Every notion fixed this way has no other basis than its passage into the opposite: reality rises up within the spectacle, and the spectacle is real” (Debord 1977: para. 8).

15. Feminist psychoanalytic film theory also takes notice of the cinematic representation of women in terms of spectacle and visual consumption. Classic works on gender in terms of seeing and being seen are de Lauretis 1984, Mulvey 1989, and Doane 1992.

16. See Walkowitz 1992 for a study of the narratives of sexual danger in late Victorian London. She examines how the class boundary was maintained through the policing of female sexuality and how feminists challenged and transcended it. Elizabeth Wilson (1991) also discusses the complexity and ambiguity of women's experience in the city. Positioned as a menace to the male social order, women experienced the city as a place of danger and at the same time, a place for pleasure and liberation.

17. For an instructive comparative case, see Stoler 1991.

18. For example, in 1899, Minister of Education Kabayama made a speech addressed to women's school principals: "A wholesome middle-class society cannot be developed only by men. They can advance the welfare of the society only after working together with wise mothers and good wives to support the family. In order to become a wise mother and good wife, it is necessary to acquire academic knowledge and skills essential to the life of the middle class as well as cultivating a graceful and refined disposition and a gentle and virtuous nature" (*Kyôikujiron* 1899:22-23).

19. It should be noted, however, that this history did not go unchallenged, and by the early 1900s, socialists and feminists (Seitô, or "Blue Stockings") had voiced strong criticism of the "good wife and wise mother" policy because of its failure to achieve genuine gender equity (see Sievers 1983).

20. Although contemporary linguists and sociolinguists have identified linguistic properties of women's language in other parts of Japanese language as well (Ide 1982, Shibamoto 1985), the Meiji intellectuals located teyo-dawa speech almost exclusively in verb-ending forms.

21. For the concept of metapragmatic salience, see, for example, Errington 1988 and Silverstein 1993. See also Lucy's (1993) introductory chapter to *Reflexive Language* for a comprehensive discussion of the nature of linguistic reflexivity.

22. See Irvine and Gal 2000:37-38 for a further discussion of how iconicity operates as a semiotic process.

23. See Jakobson 1971 and Silverstein 1976. "Shifters" are linguistic signs whose reference "shifts" according to the context. A good example would be pronouns. For example, "I" is grammatically referential, and at the same time, its indexical meaning constantly shifts every time someone says "I." Shifters thus marks the sign's mobility.

24. It also circulates as a para-text attached to commodities in the form of transaction documents and advertisements.

25. See Bauman and Briggs 1990, Briggs and Bauman 1992, Duranti and Goodwin 1992, Hanks 1989, Hill and Irvine 1993, and Silverstein and Urban 1996 for the theoretical expositions of entextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization.

26. See Bakhtin 1981 and Voloshinov 1973. Voloshinov defines reported speech as "speech within speech, utterance within utterance and at the same time also speech about speech, utterance about utterance" (Voloshinov 1973:115).

27. De Certeau observes the parallel relationship between self and other on the one hand and the "scriptural" (writing) and oral on the other: "The oral is that which does not contribute to progress; reciprocally, the 'scriptural' is that which separates itself from the magical world of voices and tradition. A frontier (and a front) of Western culture is established by that separation" (de Certeau 1984:134).

28. Bakhtin (1981) envisioned a polyvocalic utopian speech community through reported speech, the success of which relies entirely on the author's ethical commitment

to representing the voices of the other. De Certeau's discussion of citation in historiography and Bakhtin's of dialogism in literary works present a striking similarity in that both recognize the discursive construction of social relations; and yet they equally present a striking difference in terms of the social relations between the citing and the cited. This contrast would certainly entertain an important question of whether to be cited or quoted always marks subjection to social power, which is, however, beyond the scope of this article.

29. See Karatani 1993 for further discussion of the role of the *gembun'itchi* movement in the construction of the modern Japanese subject. On the relationship between *gembun'itchi* and schoolgirl speech, see Inoue 2002.

30. The functionality of this sense of sound is also similar to Roman Jakobson's (1960) "poetic" function.

31. The other is always past because in order to be cited, a speech event has to take place prior to the act of citing.

32. Jacques Derrida (1976) makes an extensive argument on the way in which the hierarchical distinction between writing and speech serves as the epistemological foundation of the Western metaphysical tradition. Derrida refers, for example, to Lévi-Strauss's ethnography of the Nambikwara. It shares the same hierarchical structure of writing and speech, where the ethnographer owns writing and the natives are illiterate with no writing technology. The Western metaphysics of phonocentrism informs Lévi-Strauss's association of writing with civilization and violence, and speech with a primitive and uncontaminated pure mode of being that was not violent. Derrida shows us how Lévi-Strauss's critique of civilization falls precisely into the trap of the ethnocentrism he attacks by according the Nambikwara only the narrow sense of "writing," whereas Derrida proposes writing as all kinds of traces, recording, and markings.

33. For the theoretical clarification of the difference between the referential and the nonreferential, see Silverstein 1976.

34. Roland Barthes calls it "the grain of the voice" (1977:179–189).

35. Irvine and Gal (2000) account for such a fetishization process in terms of "iconization." For the concept of indexing, see Silverstein 1976 and Ochs 1992.

36. This is where the dialectics of language structure, language use, and language ideology (Silverstein 1979) come into play. Metapragmatic comments rationalize and organize the indexical relationship between the social identity of the schoolgirl and her alleged linguistic behavior. To explain language use necessitates the commentator's metalinguistic knowledge (or knowledge of linguistic structure). Once it is naturalized, it forms a metapragmatic category of schoolgirl speech, which in turn informs linguistic structure and, possibly, language use.

37. As in Europe at the dawn of capitalism, the bourgeoisie, along with peasants and proletarians, were considered low class by the hereditary elite.

38. Honorifics are linguistic forms that encode deference to the interlocutor, particularly in a context where there is an asymmetrical social relationship between the speaker and the listener in terms of gender, status, or otherwise. Highly aestheticized and ritualized, the use of honorifics also indexes the speaker's refinement and good upbringing. It is in this sense that women in the elite families were expected to master the use of honorifics.

39. Japanese verbs have several inflectional forms. The number and the classification of inflectional categories depend on a particular grammatical theory. The inflected form ending with *te* is variously called a gerund (e.g., Martin 1975), *te*-form, a gerundive (Kuno 1973), or a suspended form (Sakuma 1936). For this article, I use Hasegawa's

(1996) grammatical explication of *te* as a connective suffix and will treat the inflected form with *te* as an “adverbial inflected form + *te* [connective suffix].” For the details of different inflectional categories, see Shibatani 1990.

40. In a regular sentence, this *te* is compounded with a final particle *yo* and becomes *teyo*.

41. Other examples brought up in various commentaries include *so-desu* as opposed to *so-de-gozai-masu*.

42. Omission of honorifics was the major target of the nationalist female educators who followed on the heels of male intellectuals who commented on schoolgirl speech. Shimoda Utako, for example, frequently contributed critical and programmatic essays on schoolgirl speech to young women’s magazines.

43. Hasegawa (1996) emphasizes the extent to which *te* is not simply a syntactic device but functions as a semantic filter through which a certain cognitive normalcy is established.

44. In the original text, the verb-ending forms are highlighted by a round mark.

45. See Yoda 2000 for a compelling discussion of the historical and political process in which the division of labor in the mode of writing—native script versus *kango*—came to be gendered in the modern study of premodern Japanese literature.

46. In the early Meiji period, *sōshi* referred specifically to the advocates of the Popular Rights Movement.

47. See Huysen 1986 for a discussion of the process in which “mass culture” increasingly became associated with women and became the other of male modernism.

48. Although beyond the scope of this article, theoretical reconciliation between psychoanalysis and the metapragmatic understanding of language and identity has been given relatively little attention. For cogent and provocative discussion on this issue, see Povinelli 1999 and 2001.

49. This is because for the infant, the mother’s voice is the first listening experience. It is also the mother’s speech, from which the infant first learns language, and through her verbal instruction, the infant recognizes himself and distinguishes himself from the other.

50. Whereas Derrida (1976) shows us how the voice grounds the full-presence of the subject here and now, Lacanian voice is that which undermines it. As Mladen Dolar formulates it, “*It is the voice against the voice*” (Dolar 1996:27).

51. Dolar notes: “Masculine and feminine positions are then two ways of tackling the same impossibility; they arise from the same predicament as two internally linked versions of the same voice, which retains an ineradicable ambiguity” (Dolar 1996:28).

52. For the role of consumer culture in resignifying *teyo-dawa* speech as the ideal women’s language, see Inoue n.d.

53. See Laura Ahearn’s (2001) deftly written review essay on the issue of language and agency, where she rightly cautions against conflating the notion of agency with free will or resistance.

54. “Lurking” in listserves in computer-mediated communication (CMC) would be another contemporary example. Even the more critical model of communication, which recognizes the power relation inherent in any form of communication, relies on the assumption that communication is interactive and intersubjective, and the linguistic reproduction of domination and inequality is explained as an emergent effect of the ongoing *inter*-action in mutual regard among the participants.

55. As Žižek points out, the Lacanian notion of the (split) subject complicates the sociolinguistic sense of intersubjectivity because the primordial interlocutor (another subject) is the *objet petite a*, “that which prevents him from fully realizing himself” (Žižek 2000:138–139).

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